



**Testimony in Support of H.B. 5403: An Act Establishing A Child Tax Credit Against the Personal Income Tax**

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**Submitted by  
Paola Vargas**

To the committee members on Finance, Revenue, and Bonding, hello, my name is Paola Vargas. I am a graduate student at the University of Connecticut (UConn) school of social work, and I hope to be graduating this May. My internship placement is with RACCE (Radical Advocates for Cross-Cultural Education) and we are organizing our community to fight for racial justice in our schools. I am writing to you all in strong support of H.B. 5403, an act establishing a child tax credit (CTC) against the personal income tax..

One of our partners, CT Voices for Children, estimates that it costs \$16,990 per year to raise a child here in Connecticut and that is nearly higher than any other state in the country. A CTC would be a fair and equitable way to boost poor and working families as well as close the gaps that exist between families of color and their white peers. Even \$600.00 per year, per child would have an immense impact for 600,000 children in our state. A CTC of this size would allow thousands of families to buy higher quality foods, pay for emergency expenses, child care, more family recreation time, and other daily expenses that are often put off to the next paycheck.

My experiences working at RACCE and other non-profit service providers helps me better understand the layers of financial insecurity and how that negatively impacts Connecticut families and in some cases forces them to move. Financial insecurity makes family make decisions that no one should be forced to make. This phenomenon has a huge impact on our communities and in some places, like Waterbury, makes it very difficult to develop a sense of community and belonging.

Additionally, a CTC is a robust anti-poverty measure that has proven to work in New York and California. A CTC like the one proposed in H.B. 5403 will boost Black and Brown families in ways that are not available in our state and for that reason we believe a CTC will advance racial equity as well social justice. Connecticut families need and deserve this.

Sincerely,

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